

## CASE VIGNETTE ANALYSIS INSTRUCTIONS

Read the following case scenario carefully. Then, answer each of the eight questions that follow it.

You are the social worker at a mental health facility. Mrs. Moore was extremely upset when she came to the office. She found it difficult to discuss her problem and wanted frequent reassurance that what she said would be held in confidence. Her 16 year-old daughter, Merri Lynne, is unmarried and pregnant. Merri Lynne is currently living with her aunt (Mrs. Moore's sister) about an hour away. Recently, Merri Lynne informed her parents that she has decided to keep the baby.

Just before school started last fall, Mrs. Moore and her husband learned that Merri Lynne was pregnant. Both parents were shocked and horrified, but Mrs. Moore was absolutely crushed. Despite her pain, she was able to take action and made arrangements Merri Lynne to move in with her Aunt June. Merri Lynne agreed with her parents that giving the baby up for adoption would be best for all involved. The family made elaborate precautions to insure secrecy and all family friends were told that Merri Lynne was going to Chicago for her last year of high school. Arrangements were made for mail to go to and from a Chicago address. Merri Lynne's 18 year old sister, Carol, is aware of all that is going on and took part in the planning. Mrs. Moore felt certain that her 10 and 12 year old daughters did not know what was going on.

Before Merri Lynne left home, the Moore's had not decided how all of Merri Lynn's expenses would be paid. Fred, 20, the father of the baby, is a college freshman expecting to go into military service at any time. He had wanted to marry Merri Lynne. Her parents would not agree to the marriage; therefore, Merri Lynne told Fred she did not want to get married. Feeling heartbroken and disappointed, Fred offered to be responsible and pay for half of the medical expenses.

Mr. Moore dislikes Fred because he is biracial. Fred is a quiet boy with nice manners. But Fred's offers of marriage and money had infuriated Mr. Moore who said that no boy who had any respect for a girl would get her in a mess like this and Fred was not worthy of Merri Lynne's trust and/or affection. Mrs. Moore was concerned about Fred's temper. He had slapped Merri Lynne twice during arguments concerning her desire to engage in activities that did not include him.

During the time she was dating Fred, Merri Lynne thought she was deeply in love with him. But after the initial shock of learning that she was pregnant had worn off, her "in love" feelings for Fred seemed to lessen. She became angry that she was pregnant with his child and how it was causing so much chaos in her home with her family. She was more than grateful for her father's support and readily agreed to surrender the baby for adoption.

Merri Lynne 's recent letters have indicated a growing interest in the baby. She had wondered what it will be like, what she should name it, etc. Her parents thought this was a natural reaction to her advancing pregnancy and were totally unprepared for the letter that came yesterday where she expressed she had changed her mind about giving up the baby. Merri Lynn and Fred have been writing, and she subtly hinted in her letters she might reconsider marrying him. Also, she has decided she wants to keep the baby and live with her parents. Mr. Moore is adamant about not wanting her to come home with the baby.

Mr. and Mrs. Moore can 't understand what has come over Merri Lynne, since she knows how deeply they have been hurt by this whole thing. They don 't understand how she could have allowed this to happen. Merri Lynne has always been a quiet girl. She never ran around or caused them any trouble at all until this occurred. She never seemed interested in boys or them in her. As a matter of fact, Mrs. Moore often encouraged her to be more like her 18-year-old sister, Carol, who is vivacious and popular. Carol is sought after by both boys and girls because she is "the life of the party". Carol is just like Mrs. Moore, who has had trouble understanding or getting close to Merri Lynne. On the other hand, Merri Lynne is just like her father. They don 't talk much but seem to know what is going on in each other 's minds.

Mr. and Mrs. Moore can 't see how she could do this to them after all they have done for her, including camp, music lessons, or anything within reason that she wanted. They have always tried so hard to make her happy. It devastates them that she would even consider keeping the baby or even marrying Fred.

The family income has always been just barely above the poverty level. Presently Mr. Moore is in the process of being declared disabled but continues to work in his manual labor position. He will only have disability income, which is below what he makes when he is working. Mrs. Moore has not worked outside the home and only has a high school education. They owe on a car title loan through a payday lender (\$5,000) which was taken out to pay Merri Lynne 's expenses and they owe \$4,000 in credit card debt. In addition, Mr. Moore's medical expenses will be about \$125.00 per month. The two adults are anxious about being able to pay the bills and providing the basics to their family (rent, utilities, food, clothing, etc.).

Mr. Moore's sister June asked if you could intervene with the family. June is unable to accommodate Merri Lynn and a baby and would like her brother to change his mind and allow Merri Lynn to keep the child at home with them. Mr. Moore is refusing to talk to his sister because she is taking his daughter's side. The family's minister is in agreement with the Moore's about Merri Lynn giving up the baby for adoption and is encouraging the family to proceed with terminating parental rights of Merri Lynn. Merri Lynn is showing signs of depression over the situation. Your supervisor has asked that you meet with the Moore's to assess the situation and see what areas you can help the family.

## Questions to Address

In structuring your response to the following questions, please identify each section (question) clearly. You may restate the questions in your answer if you like. Please answer in full narrative form (i.e., do not simply provide an outline). Your response should be typed and doubled spaced.

1. Who is/are your client(s) in this case?
2. What value issue(s) might be involved for you as the worker in this case?
3. What problem(s) do you identify?
4. What do you believe are the causes for the problems you have identified?
5. Based on your problem definition, state your goals for this case.
6. What roles might you as the social worker assume in order to accomplish the case goals?
7. What specific actions would need to be carried out, and by whom?
8. Whom would you contact for additional information or to clarify any unclear or contradictory content?